

# Rebuilding Our Infrastructure



*City leaders recently have taken a strong stand on the restoration of inner city infrastructure and have invited neighbors to participate in the design and execution of greatly needed projects. Not only is this a strong democratic lead towards the restoration of the inner city but also a big step in the rebuilding of the people's confidence in local government. — Hector Cardenas, Alta Vista NA*

## Introduction

This chapter of the Midtown Neighborhoods Plan focuses on initiating a proactive process to involve neighbors and business persons in the development of capital improvement projects, ensuring those projects enhance the neighborhoods' character, encouraging a strong preventative maintenance effort, re-instituting use of alleys for garbage pickup and addressing drainage concerns.

The goals, objectives, action steps, timelines, lead partners, proposed partnerships and proposed funding sources were developed by Work Group members with the assistance of city staff and other agency representatives (see Appendix C).

Lead Partners are groups who have volunteered to begin the work of developing the partnerships necessary to implement the action steps. The Lead Partners will serve as coordinators to bring together all of the groups needed to achieve the proposed action. An initial listing of these groups is included under the proposed partnerships. The community also identified potential funding sources for their action steps. The community could approach these funding sources once the work of coordination is complete.

## Goal 1: Capital Improvements

**Provide advanced notification to neighborhood associations and property owners of capital improvements, beginning with the project planning phase, to safeguard and enhance neighborhood character and ensure adequate maintenance.**

### Objective 1.1: Roadway Projects

Coordinate with the COSA Public Works Department to provide recommendations for the reconstruction and enhancement of roadway improvements making certain that new construction projects are timely, leave businesses accessible and minimize negative impacts to the neighborhood.

#### ACTION STEPS

**1.1.1** Assist in coordination of capital projects by holding joint meetings and establishing a project committee of neighborhood and business representatives to monitor the Capital Improvements Program, ensure quality, facilitate scheduling and decrease delays in street improvements that impact business operations in the area's commercial centers. General design considerations should respect and augment the area's historical character and pedestrian environment:

- Encourage wider sidewalks with planting strips/greenspace between the curb and sidewalk.
- Add bike lanes.
- Relocate utility poles to alleys or convert to underground utilities wherever possible.
- Provide funding for design enhancement including but not limited to retainer walls, bus shelters, bus benches, bike racks and landscaping.
- Investigate traffic calming alternatives for commercial corridors.
- Retain width of streets and maintain existing turning radii.
- Provide appropriate access and signage during the construction phase.
  - Timeline: Short to Mid (1-5 years)
  - Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco, new Merchant's Assns.
  - Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept., MPO



*Example of design enhancements including brick pavers, a bench, and enhanced street lighting*



*Example of a design enhance-*

## Midtown Neighborhoods Plan

- Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Capital Improvement Program; Hazard Elimination Safety Program (federal), Community Arts

**1.1.2** Coordinate with COSA Public Works Dept. and the MPO to expand and upgrade the following arterials:

- Redesign Blanco Road to address traffic calming alternatives between Summit and Hildebrand (i.e. curb bump-outs at parking areas, crosswalk markings or paver bands, and on-street angle-in parking to allow for street amenities such as outside seating); traffic issues from Cotton Elementary School to the Midtown area; installation of landscape amenities and sidewalks south of Summit. Address issues related to the Major Thoroughfare Plan.
- Provide aesthetic treatments on Hildebrand.
- Add medians along Woodlawn west of the railroad tracks where right-of-way is available.
- Address traffic flow problems at the intersection of IH-10 and Fredericksburg Road where congestion occurs at the off-ramp.
  - Timeline: Mid to Long (3- 6 years)
  - Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco
  - Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept., MPO (expanding & upgrading facilities only), TxDOT
  - Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Public Works Dept. Neighborhood Accessibility & Mobility Program; COSA Capital Improvement Program; MPO; TxDOT – TEA21 Enhancement Program, HESP, and Interstate Maintenance Fund (IM), EDA, CDBG

**1.1.3** Provide street reconstruction for the following roadway sections. Street reconstruction is considered in the context of the Pavement Management System.

- Blanco Road between Summit and Hildebrand.
- North Flores between Lynwood and Ashby.
- Breeden.
- Fulton between Aganier and Breeden.
- Fulton between Michigan and IH-10.
- Elsmere between Blanco and the railroad tracks.
- Laurel.
- Ashby (coordinate to finish construction in an expedient manner).
  - Timeline: Long (6 or more years)



*Example of a design enhancement*



*Example of a crosswalk enhancement that includes a brick paver band and a median that provides mid-street safety for pedestrians*

- Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco
- Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept.
- Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Capital Improvement Program, EDA, CDBG

#### 1.1.4 Improve street lighting at the following locations in the context of appropriate standards for neighborhood lighting.

- Rosewood between Aganier and San Pedro.
- Lynwood between North Flores and San Pedro.
- Summit between Breeden and San Pedro.
- University near Kensington.
  - Timeline: Mid (3 – 5 years)
  - Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco, new Merchants' Assns.
  - Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept., CPS
  - Proposed Funding Sources: COSA

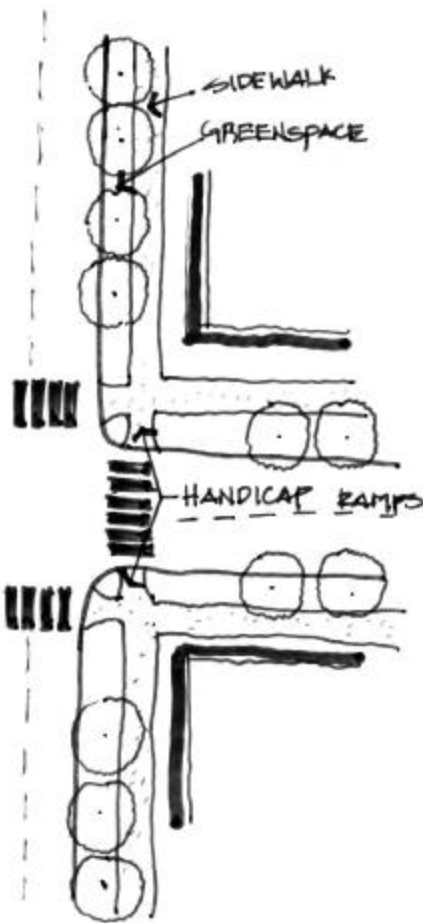
### Objective 1.2: Preventive Maintenance of Transportation Facilities

Provide regularly scheduled maintenance and upgrades to roadway and pedestrian facilities throughout the area.

#### ACTION STEPS:

##### 1.2.1 Upgrade sidewalks while maintaining the parkway/greenspace between the curb and sidewalk wherever possible and adding handicap ramps on the following streets:

- Install and repair sidewalks along North Flores from Lynwood to Ashby, Summit and the 1000 block of Blanco.
- Add sidewalks to Blanco and Fulton Roads.
- Improve sidewalks at Meridian and Cincinnati, on Russell, and on Mistletoe near San Pedro.
- Widen and repair the sidewalk on W. Huisache between Blanco and Capital.
- Widen sidewalks on Fulton Underpass construction project, and along major streets such as San Pedro Avenue and Blanco Road.
  - Timeline: Mid to Long (3-6 years)
  - Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco
  - Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept.
  - Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Capital Improvement Program, COSA Public Works



*Illustration of a preferred sidewalk layout with a greenspace.*

## Midtown Neighborhoods Plan

Dept. Neighborhood Accessibility & Mobility  
Program, EDA, CDBG; Private Sector

**1.2.2** Repair potholes on neighborhood streets. Residents should report potholes at 359-3110 for immediate action by the Street Maintenance Division.

- Timeline: Short (1-2 years)
- Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco
- Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept.
- Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Public Works  
Dept. Street Maintenance Program

**1.2.3** Improve street sweeping program through more frequent maintenance (currently once a year) on a city-wide basis.

- Timeline: Short (1-2 years)
- Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco
- Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept.
- Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Public Works  
Dept. Street Maintenance Program

**1.2.4** Improve maintenance and provide enhancements to traffic islands, especially along Woodlawn Avenue.

- Plant/replant palm trees along the length of Woodlawn Ave.
  - Timeline: Short (1-2 years)
  - Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco
  - Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works  
Dept., Parks & Recreation Dept.
  - Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Neighborhood  
Improvement Challenge Program

**1.2.5** Encourage residents to remove grass, weeds, mud, etc. from street curb while cutting lawns to provide for a better neighborhood and business appearance.

- Timeline: Short (1-2 years)
- Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco
- Proposed Partnerships: Master Gardeners  
Programs (composting)
- Proposed Funding Sources: Volunteers



## Objective 1.3 Storm Water Management & Solid Waste Disposal

Re-institute use of alleys to service the neighborhoods and address existing drainage concerns.

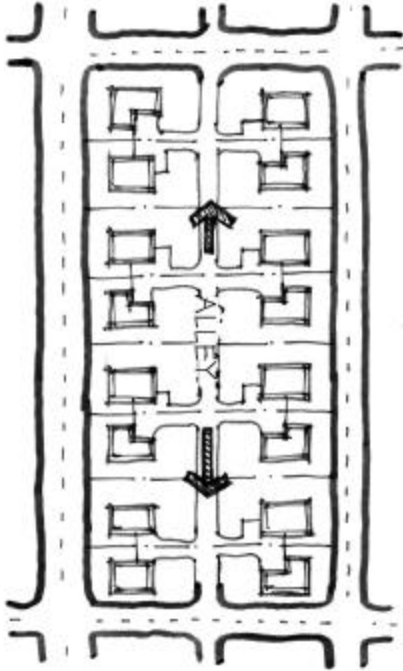
### Action Steps:

#### 1.3.1 Improve maintenance and re-institute garbage pick-up in alleys.

- Timeline: Short (1-2 years)
- Lead Partners: Neighborhood Associations
- Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept.
- Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Public Works

#### 1.3.2 Improve maintenance of storm water management systems, specifically addressing:

- areas near Twain Middle School.  
The Public Works Department's investigation of the drainage problem at Twain Middle School indicates that a tremendous effort is required to resolve the current drainage problem. The improvement (Project 35-35X) will need to be separated into several phases due to the project costs. The current (Summer 2000) cost estimate is \$4.5 million. Project construction must begin downstream and move upstream.
- 1100 block of Fulton.
- 700 block of Russell.
- area south of Woodlawn between railroad tracks and Ripley
- Blanco Road at Lynwood.
- drainage trap at North Flores at Ashby.
- eradication of snakes in drainage areas.
  - Timeline: Short (1-2 years)
  - Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco
  - Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept.
  - Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Public Works Dept., Bond Issue



*Illustration of an alley which could allow for services to be located behind the houses*

#### 1.3.3 Clarify which agencies are responsible for creek bed cleaning (see following list). Follow up with these agencies to ensure prompt maintenance.

- Martinez Creek near Hildebrand.
- Juncture of drainage way/proposed linear park with Martinez Creek.
- Creek along railroad tracks (near IH-10) at Magnolia,

## Midtown Neighborhoods Plan

Woodlawn, and Craig.

- Ditch along Pacific tracks at Mistletoe.
  - Timeline: Short (1-2 years)
  - Lead Partners: NAs
  - Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept.,  
Other responsible agencies
  - Proposed Funding Sources: Minimal cost

**1.3.4** Coordinate with the Public Works Department to provide outreach to neighborhoods on Flood Plain Management issues. Educate the community about which areas are located within flood plain.

- Timeline: Short (1-2 years)
- Lead Partners: NAs, MidTown on Blanco
- Proposed Partnerships: COSA Public Works Dept.,  
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Proposed Funding Sources: COSA Public Works Dept., FEMA, United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

